

Hamilton Field, Frame Building Type A
(Facility Nos. 451, 457, 467, 484, 485)
Escolta Avenue south of 7th Street
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-CJ

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

**HAMILTON FIELD
Frame Building Type A
(Facility Nos. 451, 457, 467, 484, 485)**

HABS No. CA-2398-CJ

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
ICS-

Location:

Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Frame Building Type A
Airmen's Barracks (Facility Nos. 451 [southeast corner of Escolta Avenue and 7th Street], 457 [east side of Escolta Avenue between 7th and 8th Street], 467 [east side of Escolta Avenue between 8th and 9th Streets], 484 [Escolta Avenue between 10th and 11th Streets], and 485 [on 10th east of Escolta Avenue])

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; b: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; d: 541040/4212600

Significance:

Buildings 451, 457, 467, 484, and 485 are considered significant for their association with Air Force history in northern California, and with World War II actions in the Pacific Theater. These two-story cantonment buildings were erected adjacent to the main base area beginning in 1939 and continuing through 1942, as the base property was expanded and additional temporary housing areas were established. During the war, the level areas on either side of 7th, 8th, 9th, and 11th streets were lined with buildings of this type.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-A for a condensed Statement of Significance.

Description:

The two-story frame barracks buildings are rectilinear in shape and measure approximately 30 by 80 feet. They have low-pitched composition shingle gable roofs with louvered vents in the gable ends and overhanging eaves. The buildings have skirt roofs, also with composition shingles, which separate the first and second floors. Siding is horizontal wood frame, covered with asbestos shingles. The foundations are concrete wall and the floors concrete slab. Entrance doors, on each end of the buildings, are metal with glass panel or wood with four lights over three recessed panels. Doors are accessed by concrete steps. Lock sets are standard metal with exterior thumbblatch locks, with interior round knobs and half-mortised hinges. Doors have metal panic bars on the interior. Windows are eight- over eight-light double hung wood sash, with 11 on each second story side elevation and 10 on

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the lower story. Exterior wood staircases provide access to second floors through wooden doors with four lights over three recessed wood panels. Wood fire escape ladders are on each end at the second story level.

Building interiors originally consisted of a day room and large barracks room on each floor, but many have now been divided into separate offices. A stairway, with two- by four-inch railing and four- by four-inch posts, provides access to the second floor. Walls are clad in gypsum board and covered with composition wooden paneling in many areas. Some of the ceilings have been covered with gypsum board acoustical tile or sprayed stucco. Others have exposed truss systems with six-inch-square beams supported by braces. Flooring is eight-inch square vinyl asphalt tile over tongue and groove wood. Interior doors are solid core wood with five horizontal recessed panels; replacement doors are hollow core wood. Original lighting fixtures are of the "schoolhouse" type, with a porcelain canopy and suspended milk glass bowl shade. Replacement lights are industrial type open end double tube fluorescent fixtures mounted flush with the ceiling or suspended on rods and chains.

A communal latrine with concrete floor is located in each building. They have ceramic tile floors, with one- by one-inch, one- by two-inch, and two- by two-inch tiles. Walls are clad in four- by four-inch ceramic tile. Showers have four to six shower heads and tile walls. All floors are concrete. A changing room with wood benches adjoins the shower area. Sinks are enameled cast iron wall-mounted, made by Standard; each has a mirror. There are four to six sinks in each barracks. Standard Sanitary Corp. Pacific flush valve toilets are located in each latrine. There are no stall dividers in this area. One cast iron, wall-mounted urinal trough with four drains is present in each bathroom. A metal SUNROC drinking fountain with a porcelain top is in the hallway. There are also floor-mounted cast iron mop sinks in each latrine. Bathroom lighting fixtures are recessed chrome and glass.

The buildings have exposed duct work and were heated with gas furnaces. Buildings 451, 457, and 467 have "Custom Aire" heating units in mechanical rooms accessible only from the building exterior. Facilities 484 and 485 have similar rooms with louvered metal doors. These two buildings also contain a RUUD gas-fueled water heater. The heaters are cast iron with copper heating cores and stand on claw feet. A plaque on the heaters is labeled "RUUD Automatic Water Heater, RUUD Manufacturing Co., Pittsburgh, PA Patented 11/3/1909.

Building 467 has been renovated in recent years by the Marin Power Squadron, a sea rescue unit. This group has salvaged parts from other barracks around base (windows, doors, etc.) and have retained the original appearance of the barracks.

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Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

These five temporary barracks were among the first temporary structures erected at Hamilton and were finished prior to the U. S. involvement in World War II. Facilities 484 and 485 were finished on October 1, 1940, for \$8,187.32 and the others were completed on February 14, 1941, for \$7,968.00. After the war years, the demand for housing decreased and these buildings were partitioned into small offices (except for Facility 451) and used for administrative purposes. In 1966 Facility 457 was a designated chapel annex, Facility 467 served as a squadron headquarters, Facility 484 had administration offices, and Facility 485 was an academic classroom.

Sources:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

See the following field records:

Facility No. 451, Barracks: roll 46, exposures 3-4; roll 51, exposures 1-12
Facility No. 457, Barracks: roll 46, exposures 1-2, 5-6; roll 92, exposures 9-10
Facility No. 467, Barracks: roll 45, exposures 9-12
Facility No. 484, Barracks: roll 44, exposures 11-12; roll 92, exposures 5-8
Facility No. 485, Barracks: roll 44, exposures 1-2; roll 45, exposures 1-4, 7-8

The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

Project Information:

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration (GSA). The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible

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for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part B00, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

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Date prepared: July 1995

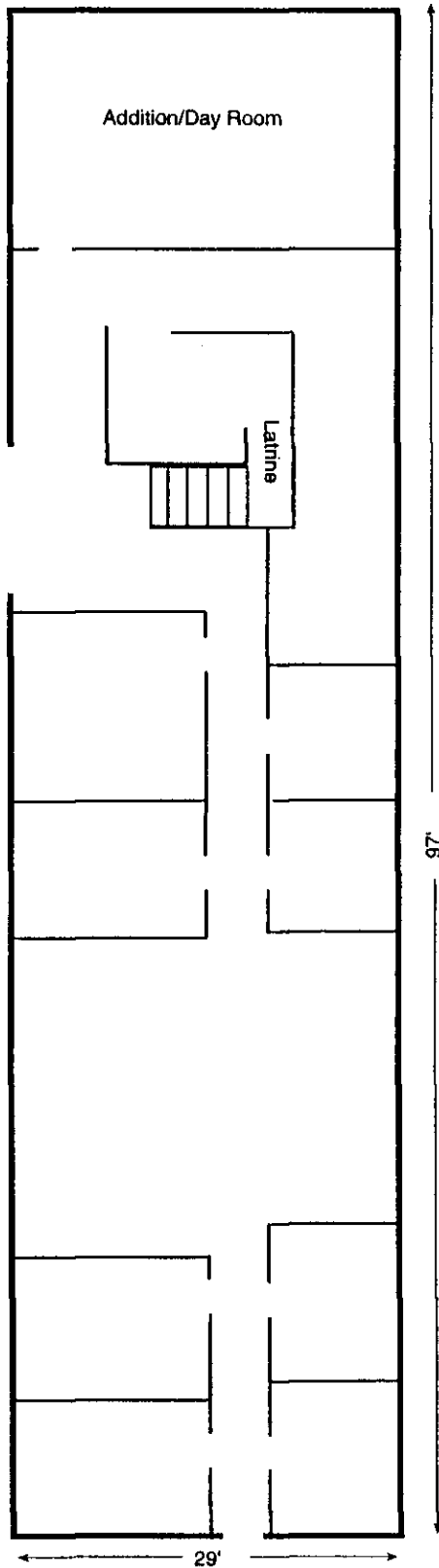
Photography prepared by: David De Vries

Affiliation: Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California

Date of photographs: May 1993 and November 1994.



First Floor



NOTE: Unlabeled space served as living quarters

Second Floor

